CUBA

Anything Going to
Happen on May 20?

On a lonely stretch of coastline off Las Uvas Key, 100 miles from Havana, a loyal fisherman found a "terrorist" arms cache that included twelve pistols, 15 rifles, ten antipersonnel mines, 58 magnetic bombs, 84 packages of explosives, and assorted detonators, machetes, fuses, knives, a portable radio and other equipment. At least that's what the Cuban radio reported last week, crying that the arms came from "North American espionage agencies."

In Washington, U.S. intelligence sources quickly denied any new undercover campaign against Castro. The U.S., said a spokesman, has not slipped arms into Cuba since just before the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961. Castro may have uncovered one of those old caches. But the greater likelihood was that he had found it long ago, and had just now decided to make an issue of it.

Why? One possibility was that he might be trying to whip up his people against a new attempt at guerrilla warfare by some of the 300,000 anti-Castro Cubans living in exile. The exiles have been relatively quiet since the Bay of Pigs, but now they are on the move again—with or without U.S. help. Numbers of young exiles, many of them with U.S. Army training, have disappeared from Miami and other cities recently; exile guerrilla-training camps are reported operating in Nicaragua, Costa Rica and other Central American hideaways. At least one of these is run by Manuel Artime, a leader in the Bay of Pigs landing, who occasionally pops up in Miami. Another exile leader, Manuel Ray, once one of Castro's chief lieutenants, has pledged that he will return to Cuba to revive the anti-Castro underground by May 20, the 62nd anniversary of Cuba's independence from Spain.

Castro himself sounds edgy and gloomy about the future. In his May Day speech, he dourly conceded that some day his Communist regime might be toppled. "Most of us—the leaders of today—would disappear in that struggle; but the people would remain, and the party would remain." Surely the people would remain.